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PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

A FIGHT AGAINST
FATE

DRAMA

BY

JOHN RUPERT FARRELL

DICK & FITZGERALD
PUBLISHERS
18 Ann Street, New York

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A FIGHT AGAINST FATE

A Drama in Four Acts

BY
JOHN RUPERT FARRELL

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A FIGHT AGAINST FATE.

CHARACTERS.

MAJOR REMMING.....	<i>An escaped Convict</i>
JUDSON SUMMERS.....	<i>Alice's Father</i>
SETH RUTHERFORD.....	<i>A young Farmer</i>
OLIVER BUDD.....	<i>A Farm Hand</i>
BULLARD.... }	<i>The Major's Partners</i>
COREY..... }	
LUTCHENBERG.....	<i>A Banker</i>
GALLOWAY.....	<i>A Sheriff</i>
ALICE.....	<i>The Major's Wife</i>
SUE.....	<i>Oliver's Sweetheart</i>

TIME.—The present.

LOCALITY.—The Summers' Homestead near New York.

TIME OF PLAYING.—Two hours and a half.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. Exterior of JUDSON SUMMERS' homestead. Evening. MAJOR REMMING has secretly married ALICE, JUDSON'S daughter. The MAJOR has been a thief. His two pals previous to his marriage discover that the MAJOR is an escaped convict. At his marriage, the MAJOR has determined to lead a new life, but his pals will not let him. They have formed a plot to use ALICE as a decoy to enveigle a rich banker, with a view to robbery. ALICE is horrified, leaves her husband and seeks her father's pardon. The father is obdurate and compels her to return to her husband. SETH, her former lover, follows her, hoping to rescue her.

ACT II. The MAJOR's apartments in New York. Next evening. The MAJOR's terrible dilemma. The sheriff is on his track, but he defies his tempters, and will surrender rather than allow his wife to be used to entrap and rob the banker. ALICE, to save her husband, agrees to aid the robbers. At the critical moment SETH interferes, saves the banker and defeats the thieves.

ACT III. Old-fashioned sitting-room in SUMMERS' home-stead. Next evening. ALICE returns home and is at last received by her father. The MAJOR still determines to redeem the past, but his companions will not permit it. The MAJOR's alternative,—to keep with them or to be handed over to the Sheriff. SETH takes a hand in it and frustrates their designs. JUDSON opens his house to ALICE and the MAJOR.

ACT IV. Same scene as ACT III. Morning. Three months later, during which the MAJOR has gained confidence and respect, and is offered responsible employment. His two former companions have been bought off by SETH, but now demand further blackmail, which is again paid by SETH. The MAJOR witnesses this unseen, and forces BULLARD to return SETH's cheque. COREY is repentant, but BULLARD still persists against the MAJOR. The Sheriff is seen approaching. SETH and the MAJOR exchange hats and coats, and the MAJOR succeeds in escaping on horseback. Shortly after the MAJOR is thrown from his horse and is brought back in a dying condition. COREY has learned that BULLARD is wanted by the police, denounces him, and BULLARD is led off a prisoner. The MAJOR's dying words entreat SETH to protect ALICE.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS.

MAJOR REMMING. Age 32, clean cut and neatly dressed. He is a man of quiet determination, and thoroughly self-controlled; his former career entirely changed by his love for his wife. He was an escaped convict, and now blackmailed by former evil companions.

JUDSON SUMMERS. Age about 50. Costume befitting a well-to-do farmer. Very determined in his ways, but subsequently yielding to paternal affection.

SETH RUTHERFORD. A young and successful farmer aged 27. Well-dressed, frank, good-natured, but resolute. A friend in need.

A Fight Against Fate.

OLIVER BUDD. Age 20. Ordinary farm dress, but sportively inclined and an enthusiast for baseball. In Act IV. he appears in underclothing of a loud pattern.

BULLARD. Age 35, flashily dressed. Voice and manner snappy and vindictive; the MAJOR's bitter persecutor.

COREY. Age 26. Dressed in loud fashion, voice and manner tough; not altogether depraved, and smarting under Bullard's peremptory domination.

LUTCHENBERG. Age 45. Plainly but handsomely dressed; Jewish in appearance and accent.

GALLOWAY. Age 40. Western type, frank and outspoken.

ALICE. Age 22. Tastily but neatly dressed; devoted to her husband, the Major, even to the crucial test of self-sacrifice.

SUE. A rather coquettish girl of 19, but true to OLIVER, her lover.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES.

Baseball mask and bat; letter; tract; bag of peanuts; another letter, for OLIVER. Half-mask; newspaper for BULLARD. Photograph; revolver; cheque-book, for SETH. Letter for JUDSON. Half-mask for MAJOR. Leather bag of money for LUTCHENBERG. Half-mask; flask of whiskey, for COREY.

NOTE. The lamp used in Act II, that Lutchenberg smashes may be made of metal, a large candle being used in place of oil. The instant the lamp is smashed the lights should be lowered. This is a very effective scene but requires some rehearsing.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage, facing the audience, R. L. C. means the right hand, left hand, and centre of the stage. D. R., door at right; D. L., door at left; D. C., door in centre of rear flat. Up, toward rear of stage; down, toward the footlights.

A FIGHT AGAINST FATE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Exterior of the SUMMERS' homestead. Sunset. Roadway at rear; fence with gate at c. in front of roadway. EXITS R. and L. of the road. EXIT L. c. to house. Garden chair down L. with a rifle leaning against it. Rustic settee down R. JUDSON SUMMERS DISCOVERED seated on chair R.*

ENTER SUE rear R. humming. "*The Old Oaken Bucket.*"

SUE (*approaching JUDSON*). Have you heard from Alice lately, Mr. Summers?

JUDSON. Not one word, Sue, but I am just as well satisfied, —letters only serve to bring her back in memory.

ENTER OLIVER, rear R., carrying a baseball mask and a bat. Stops up stage and listens.

SUE. I've said a lot of hard things about Alice, but I want to take them all back. She's still my old schoolmate, and I'm going to New York to-morrow, to bring her back!

JUDSON (*rising, sternly*). That I forbid!

OLIVER. What right have you to forbid that? You turning against her is no reason why her friends should. (*To SUE*) What have you been saying, Miss Busybody?

SUE (*a little ashamed of herself*). All I said, Oliver, was that she had been seen drinking wine in a public place.

OLIVER. What if she did drink wine—perhaps the water wasn't fit to drink. I've seen water that I wouldn't drink myself if there was wine in sight. Alice isn't here to speak for herself, or she'd say this scandal about her is all a lie! (*Turning to JUDSON*) And with all respect to you, Mr. Summers, you should be the last to believe a word of it.

JUDSON. It is a good trait in you, Oliver, to defend an

erring woman, but she drove the happiness from Seth's heart and mine, when she ran away. (*Moves to house door.*)

OLIVER. There's not a man in the village that hasn't a good word for her, it's the durned women that's doing all the talking. (*Looking at SUE*) Yes, you're one of them.

SUE. But I've repented. I would not listen to a word against her now.

OLIVER. Me for Alice, whether you do or not.

JUDSON. Come, come, you two must not quarrel, true love does not run that way.

OLIVER. The course of true love never did run smooth when there was a woman in it. If a girl can't make a fellow happy before marriage, it's dollars to doughnuts that she won't after marriage.

SUE. I'll try to, Oliver.

OLIVER. Well, before we start on the home run, I'm going to learn a little more about your sex. (*Remembers that he has a letter and produces it*) Durn me if I didn't almost forget this letter. (*Gives the letter to JUDSON*) It's post-marked New York, and it looks like her handwriting.

SUE (*crosses c. eagerly*). Oh, let me read it, please do.

OLIVER (*advancing to her*). The letter isn't for you. If you want something to read, take this tract that I picked up on the roadside. It's called "The Evils Of The Tongue," and when you've read it, think of Alice, and keep quiet about her.

SUE (*taking the tract*). I never thought you'd turn into a musty old preacher. (*Sits R. and reads.*)

OLIVER (*in disgust*). Preacher! I'm a ball player and some day I'll play with one of the big leagues. (*Turning to JUDSON*) If they'll let me. (*To JUDSON*) Is the letter from Alice?

JUDSON (*sadly*). Yes, it is from my poor girl.

[EXITS *into house with bowed head.*

OLIVER (*gazes after him a few moments, then turns to look at SUE*). She's reading the tract all right. It's a patent medicine advertisement, but it fooled me. (*Crosses and sits beside her*) Did you get to where it says "Take three pills night and morning?"

SUE (*throwing the tract away in disgust*). I thought there was something wrong with it.

OLIVER (*takes out a bag of peanuts and gives one to SUE*). Have a peanut? (*She takes the peanut and eats it in silence. OLIVER repeating the action*). Have another?

SUE (*taking the peanut*). Stingy!

OLIVER (*giving the bag to her*). Here, take the bag.
(SUE *eats the peanuts in silence*.)

OLIVER (*after a pause*). Do you know, Sue, you remind me an awful lot of a squirrel.

SUE (*munching away*). How is that?

OLIVER. You're so durned fond of nuts.

SUE. Don't you think you used me kind of rough?

OLIVER. Let's kiss and make up.

SUE (*offering a kiss*). Just one.

OLIVER. When I kiss a girl, I do it right, providing she isn't chewing gum. One of my kisses is just as sweet as a pound of chocolates, and you don't have to use a napkin.

SUE (*in position*). Well, I'm ready.

OLIVER (*looking at her*). Your mouth is just watering for a kiss. What are you thinking about?

SUE. Lemons, Oliver, lemons!

OLIVER. Now you've got *my* mouth watering. (*Wipes his mouth*.)

SUE (*disappointed*). You're awful slow.

OLIVER (*turning away carelessly*). Maybe I don't want it.

SUE. You said you'd kiss and make up. You can't blame me for being angry with Alice. Seth is wearing his heart away for her, and he won't let me give him one word of comfort.

OLIVER. Seth is wise. When a woman offers a fellow comfort in a love affair, it is hard to tell what her game is.

SUE. I don't think you'd make a very good husband.

OLIVER (*placing his arm around her*). Yes, you do.

SUE. I'm not sure, but somebody's got to take you.
(*Turns her face to him for a kiss*.)

OLIVER. Then I might as well do it. (*Kisses her vehemently*.)

SUE (*rubbing her face and lips*). There, you've gone and cracked my lips!

OLIVER. Let's try it again, Sue.

SUE (*rising*). No, no more of your kisses for me.
(*Goes up stage to gate and looks off R.*)

OLIVER. Out on first base, and the umpire wasn't looking.

SUE. Oh, they are coming back!

OLIVER (*looking towards her*). Who's coming back?

SUE. Two friends of mine from the city. One of *them* is an ex-prize fighter. Oliver, what does that mean?

OLIVER. Excellent prize fighter.

SUE. He told me that he fell in love with me at first sight.

OLIVER (*fondling the bat*). I'll put him out in the first inning if he tries to steal a base on me. (*Joins SUE and looks off R.*) A couple of "Grandstanders" all right. (*To SUE*) You be careful how you talk to those fellows. (*Moves down L.*)

SUE (*to herself*). Jealous already, well, I'll just give you good cause to be. (*Waving her hand in welcome*) Here they come!

ENTER COREY and BULLARD rear R.

SUE. I was afraid you'd gone back to New York.

COREY (*touching her under the chin*). Without saying good-bye to you, pretty one. You should know me better than that. (*Offering his arm*) Come on, let's sit down and have a heart to heart talk. (*Leads her to settee down R. and seats himself with her. BULLARD moves down C. takes out a paper and reads.*)

SUE (*surveying COREY in admiration*). You are a perfect fashion plate. I want you to come and see me again some time.

COREY. Sure I will, and I'll take you to New York whenever you feel like going.

SUE. That is very kind of you.

COREY. Not at all. I'll buy you all the soda and peanuts you can eat and drink, and take you to the theatre as well.

OLIVER (*laughing loudly*). He's a dead game sport, all right!

COREY (*to OLIVER*). What are you laughing at?

OLIVER (*in surly tones*). None of your business.

COREY (*to SUE*). Tell that boy to bring me a glass of water.

SUE (*to OLIVER*). Oliver, bring the gentleman a glass of water.

OLIVER (*defiantly*). Let the gentleman go and get it.

SUE. You're just like the country boys, not a bit polite.

COREY (*to SUE*). Never mind, sweetheart. (*Holding his arm out*) Feel my muscle, when I was in the ring, I was a wonder.

SUE (*feeling his muscle*). My! But you are a man, every inch. (*To OLIVER*) Oliver, come and feel the gentleman's muscle.

OLIVER (*shouting*). What do I want to feel his muscle for?

COREY (*to OLIVER*). Come on, son, don't be a grouch. Feel the muscle of a fighting man. I won't hurt you.

OLIVER (*fondling the bat*). You can bet you won't hurt me!

COREY (*placing his arm around SUE*). Notice how the girls all take to a fighting man? (*To SUE*) Come on, Sis, give your big brother a kiss. (*Tries to kiss her.*)

SUE (*holding off*). Oh no, Oliver might not like it.

COREY (*to OLIVER*). Chase yourself, kid, chase yourself!

OLIVER (*moves to BULLARD and knocks the paper out of his hand*). Say, sport?

BULLARD. What's the matter, Rube?

OLIVER (*pointing at COREY*). That's my girl you're getting gay with. (*Cautiously to BULLARD*) Say, is he a real prize-fighter?

BULLARD. The best in the business.

OLIVER (*in doubt*). Honest?

BULLARD. Sure. Don't monkey with that fellow, he's dangerous.

OLIVER (*fondling the bat and looking at COREY*). That fellow's a warrior. (*To BULLARD*) You tell him I'd like to talk to him, will you?

BULLARD. Sure. (*Crosses to COREY*) Corey, the kid wants to speak to you. (*COREY rises. BULLARD takes his place with SUE.*)

COREY (*crosses to OLIVER*). Hello, kid, want to see me?

OLIVER (*to COREY*). Yes, I never met a prize-fighter before. (*Backing away cautiously*) How do you do?

COREY (*holding out his hand*). Shake. (*They shake hands. COREY tries to hurt him, but OLIVER discovers that he has the strongest grip, and makes COREY howl with pain. COREY raises his left hand to strike.*)

OLIVER (*raising the bat with his left hand*). Go on!

COREY (*trying to pull away*). Hey, let go, kid!

(*OLIVER releases him and then discovers that BULLARD has his arm around SUE. Moves to centre and whistles to BULLARD.*)

BULLARD (*to SUE*). Listen to the jay bird. (*Looks up.*)
SUE (*to OLIVER*). Were you whistling to us?

OLIVER. I want to talk to that fellow.

COREY (*to OLIVER*). Crush his mit, kid, crush his mit. (*Crosses R.*)

BULLARD. Oh, tell him to go and milk the cows. I don't want to bother with him.

SUE. Nor do I. (*Rises and moves up R. c.*) Will somebody take me for a walk?

BULLARD (*rises quickly and offers his arm*). With pleasure, my dear Sue.

COREY (*offering his arm*). Down the lane with me, my country rosebud.

SUE. A walk with either of you gentlemen would be perfectly delightful. (*Crosses and takes OLIVER'S arm*) but I prefer to go with Oliver.

OLIVER. To the stable for yours and make yourselves right at home. (*To SUE*) Down the lane with me, my country rosebud.

[*EXIT with SUE into house, laughing.*]

BULLARD. See here, Corey, we are here for business, not pleasure. We must get the girl back to New York before her father gets a chance to forgive her.

COREY. She's a pretty sort of a wife to throw him down when there's a big stake in sight. (*They move to c.*)

BULLARD. It's a fight between Alice and us.

COREY. She's got him on the run. He wants to drop us now, and live respectable.

BULLARD (*laughing*). The Major live respectable! Why, he's been crooked for years.

COREY. You know something. Tip me off.

BULLARD. I will, on condition that you keep your mouth shut, and follow me in every move I make.

COREY. There's my hand on it. (*They shake hands*) Now what do you know?

BULLARD. I learned this by accident. The Major is an escaped convict. He worked his way out of a Western penitentiary two years ago.

COREY. Go on.

BULLARD. There is a thousand reward for his capture.

COREY. How did you get next?

BULLARD. Through a Western Sheriff called Galloway. The Major escaped from his custody.

COREY. Where is he now?

BULLARD. In New York, looking for his man.

COREY (*gives a low whistle of surprise*). What would the Major do if he knew?

BULLARD. Fly the coop. What else could he do with ten years staring him in the face?

COREY. Bullard, the Major's played a square game with

us, now let's deal square with him, and tip him off that the Sheriff is after him. He got tied up with a woman, but that's human nature.

BULLARD. Corey, you are a fool. I'm as far above you, as the Major is above me. Follow my lead and we'll come out on top.

COREY. Well, make your game clear, so I'll understand.

BULLARD. We'll use our knowledge to frighten his wife.

COREY. To get at Lutchenberg?

BULLARD. Precisely.

COREY. After the deal, what then?

BULLARD. Then we'll have money enough to get along without the Major. If she refuses to work with us, back to prison he goes.

COREY. I never betrayed a pal in my life, Bullard, and I'd hate to do it with the Major.

BULLARD. Corey, you are running third in this game, the Major's first, I'm second. Alone you couldn't make two dollars a day. Stick to me, I'll stick to the Major, and we'll divide a fortune between us.

COREY. If she would only get in line.

BULLARD (*with determination*). We'll make her.

COREY. Easier said than done. Where is she now?

BULLARD (*looking around*). Oh, she's not far off. By the appearance of things, the old gentleman is pretty well to do. I wonder what he thinks of his wayward girl? (*They move up stage.*)

COREY. She may be in the house now.

BULLARD. No she's not. (*Looking off R.*) Here comes the Major.

COREY (*looking off L.*). And here comes his wife. (*They move down R. C.*)

ENTER MAJOR, rear R.

MAJOR. Well, have you seen her?

BULLARD. Yes, she's coming from that direction. (*Points L.*)

MAJOR (*looking off L.*). You are right, true to her word, she is coming to ask her father's forgiveness. (*Moves down C.*)

BULLARD (*moving a little nearer*). Use all your influence, force if necessary, to get her away from here at once. Damn her——

MAJOR (*interrupting him*). Don't damn that girl, Bullard,

or I'll break your neck. Though I am trying to drag her to our level, I will not let any man speak that way of her.

BULLARD. She's one of us.

COREY. Bullard's right.

MAJOR. That is her misfortune.

BULLARD (*sneeringly*). Well, she doesn't care for you, Major. She thinks herself above us three.

MAJOR. And so she is, as far above us as the sky is from the ground.

COREY. Think of the money, Major.

MAJOR. A dirty job for an honest woman, Corey.

BULLARD. Well, there's no taint to the coin. She could do the trick easy.

MAJOR. She will do the trick, and it is the last.

BULLARD. Not redemption, Major, surely?

MAJOR. Yes, redemption, I'm going to live *her* way.

COREY. After this job, that goes!

ENTER ALICE L. and moves down L. C. The MAJOR approaches her quickly.

MAJOR. Alice!

ALICE (*turning with a gesture of fear*). What are you doing here?

MAJOR. I want you to come home with me.

ALICE. This is my future home if my father will take me back.

MAJOR. Don't desert me, Alice, you are my wife.

ALICE. But not your slave, Major, and none but a slave would do your bidding. I will not become a thief for you, nor your comrades there!

BULLARD. It means a fortune to us.

ALICE. And dishonor to me!

COREY (*to BULLARD*). What does that mean?

BULLARD. I don't know.

ALICE. No, you are both too low to know what that means to a woman (*To MAJOR*) but *you* are different, Major. You know what it means when you ask me to become your partner in crime?

MAJOR. You knew what I was when you married me.

ALICE. Yes, and I thought my love was strong enough to keep you from sin. It is far better that we should part forever!

MAJOR (*earnestly*). I could not live without you, Alice. (*Taking her hands*) Come, come with me.

JUDSON (*from within*). There's somebody outside, see who it is, Seth.

SETH (*answering from within*). All right, Judson.

ALICE (*in fear*). Don't let them see you here, don't let them see you here!

BULLARD (*cunningly*). Come to the depot with us.

ALICE (*pushing the MAJOR to R.*). Go, Major, go!

[EXIT BULLARD and COREY quickly R. followed by the MAJOR and ALICE.

ENTER ALICE in a few moments to watch JUDSON and SETH unseen.

ENTER SETH slowly from the house, and crosses to settee R. where he sits and takes a photograph out of his pocket, and gazes at it in silence for a few moments. JUDSON appears in doorway and watches him.

JUDSON. Thinking of Alice? It would be better for you, boy, if she had never been born. (*Approaches SETH.*)

SETH (*places the photograph in his pocket, and looks up, slightly confused*). I didn't hear you coming, Judson.

JUDSON. Forget her, Seth, she is unworthy of you. (*Gives letter to him*) Read this letter.

SETH (*reads*). "Forgive me and take me back. The man I married is an escaped convict, I cannot live with him and be a good woman. Seth will forgive me, I know. Will you not be as kind to your unhappy girl? Send Seth for me. Alice."

JUDSON. She has chosen her companions, knowing their evil life. Let her seek protection from *them*!

SETH. If I were the father of a girl, I'd go through fire and water to protect her, and whether you like it or not, Judson, I'm going to Alice. (*Rises.*)

JUDSON. She is another man's wife, Seth, you have no right to interfere! (*Crosses slowly to door*) It is well that her mother is not alive to witness her disgrace.

[EXIT into house.

ENTER ALICE, R. and moves towards the door with outstretched hands.

ALICE. Father!

SETH (*goes to her quickly and takes her hands in welcome*). Alice!

ALICE (*with bowed head*). Seth!

SETH. Is it all true, Alice?

ALICE (*looking into his eyes*). Yes. It is true.

SETH. What can I do for you, Alice, that is all I want to know now.

ALICE. If my father were only as charitable, I might be happy again, but I overheard his bitter words.

ENTER SUE and OLIVER from house. SUE runs to ALICE and embraces her. OLIVER draws near.

OLIVER. I've got to hug her, or I'll bust with joy. (*Embraces ALICE quickly*) Alice!

JUDSON (*from within*). Seth, ho, Seth!

ALICE (*in fear*). Seth, my father!

SETH. Courage, Alice, courage!

OLIVER (*leading SUE down R.*). I hope he won't be angry with her.

JUDSON (*in doorway*). Seth. (*On seeing ALICE, he stops and assumes a stern attitude.*)

ALICE (*approaching him. Gently*). Father!

JUDSON (*sternly*). I did not send for you!

ALICE. Forgive me, father, I have no other home!

JUDSON. Go to your husband, he will provide for you. (*Sits down L.*)

ALICE (*approaching him*). I want you to take me back, dad; to think of me, not as I am, but as your little Alice, who used to play at your knee, and bring your slippers to you when evening came, lisping the first word my mother ever taught me to speak,—Daddy! (*Sinks at his knees in an outburst of grief*) Daddy!

JUDSON (*sternly, but with a great effort*). Before the sun has set, you must be gone from my grounds!

ALICE (*looking up at him in despair*). You will not forgive me?

JUDSON (*sternly*). No!

ALICE (*rising and drawing back*). Father!

OLIVER (*crying*). If you'll take her back, I'll quit smoking, stop playing ball on Sunday, go to church and marry Sue!

SUE (*crying*). And I'll do all that Oliver does!

OLIVER. Sue will quit smoking stogies, too.

SUE (*pulling him*). Oliver!

JUDSON (*sternly*). Before the sun has set, she must be gone!

ENTER MAJOR, BULLARD and COREY R. and move down c.

COREY nearest the audience, then BULLARD and the MAJOR. SETH faces them.

SETH. Gentlemen, what is your business here?

MAJOR. I want my wife!

SETH (*moving down R. C.*). His wife!

ALICE (*goes to the MAJOR in fear*). Why did you return?

JUDSON (*placing his left hand on rifle which is resting against the arm of the chair*). That is the man! (*Faces them quickly with the rifle in his hands*) Which one, girl, which one!

ALICE (*frightened*). I will not tell you, father, you would kill him.

JUDSON. Then I will read the guilt in his eyes. The man who quails before my gun, is the one I will kill.

(*They are standing in a row. He levels the gun, first at COREY, and then at BULLARD. They meet him without flinching. JUDSON then levels it at the MAJOR, who starts back with a cry of fear. JUDSON gives a cry of rage, and takes aim. ALICE springs forward as the shot is fired, and raises the rifle, then sinks at her father's knee, crying.*)

ALICE. Father, do not kill the man I love!

SETH (*pointing R.*). Go, while your lives are safe.

(*The MAJOR, BULLARD and COREY withdraw R. SETH moves into R. C. OLIVER places his arm around SUE, who lays her head on his shoulder in grief. ALICE rises.*)

JUDSON (*to ALICE*). Follow your husband. He came to take you with him. (*Turns away from her.*)

ALICE (*looks at SETH, and then approaches JUDSON with a pleading gesture*). Father, you are sending me to my ruin!

JUDSON (*pointing sternly R.*). Your place is by your husband's side. Go! and never let me see your face again. (*Turns away from her.*)

ALICE (*turns to SETH, sobbing*). Seth! Seth!

SETH. I never thought he could be so cruel!

ALICE. The sun is setting on the old home, Seth, and it is setting on my life. Just as every dear old scene will soon be dark, so will the future be to me. Good-bye, Seth! good-bye!

[EXIT rear L. *crying bitterly.*

JUDSON (*moves to SETH and offers his hand, speaking in a tone of deep emotion*). Seth, my boy!

SETH (*drawing himself up*). I will never take your hand

again, Judson; she came to you with tears in her eyes, and heart heavy with sadness, and you drove her from you, your own child! (*Looks off L.*) She shall not go into the world alone!

JUDSON. Seth! What are you going to do?

SETH. Follow the woman I love!

(*As the curtain descends SETH moves off L. and JUDSON bows his head in grief.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Next evening. A furnished room in the MAJOR'S apartment in New York. Doors R. L., and C. of rear flat. Speaking tube near D. C. Telephone near D. R. Table and chairs down L. chair down R. Easy chair down L. Other furniture as convenient. Lighted lamp on table.*
DISCOVERED COREY asleep on chair L.

ENTER BULLARD D. C. *crosses and sits R.*

COREY (*dreaming*). Crush his mit, Kid—crush his mit! (*Snores.*)

BULLARD (*crosses to COREY, then yells in his ear*). Ding! Dong! Time!

COREY (*springs up in fighting attitude, and knocks BULLARD over*). Who hollered "time"? I thought I was in the ring. Say, Bullard, how do you make love?

BULLARD. You're a pretty looking specimen to ask a question like that. (*Rises*)

COREY. I'm going to make love to Sue.

BULLARD. Tell her that her eyes are like two twinkling electric lights.

COREY. You mean stars.

BULLARD. You want the approved way?

COREY. Sure.

BULLARD. Then electric lights goes. Hair like the sweet seaweed. Teeth like the gleaming billiard ball. Form like the matchless thoroughbred. Voice like the megaphone. Drop on your knees, go at it like a true sport, and you'll win Sue.

COREY (*in doubt*). Straight?

BULLARD. On the level.

COREY. I'll do it!

BULLARD. Something will happen if you do.

ENTER ALICE D. C. and comes down.

ALICE. Where is the Major?

BULLARD (*rises*). Gone out. He said he would return in a few minutes. (*Pause*) So you've decided to join us, eh?

ALICE. I came to seek my husband, but not to join *you*.

BULLARD. Well, I've found a way to make you obedient.

ALICE. Bullard, your words are an insult. If I told the Major he would make you regret them!

BULLARD. You will keep silent for the sake of peace. (*Coaxingly*) You will help us with Lutchenberg, will you not?

ALICE (*firmly*). No!

BULLARD (*in quiet steady tones*). You will, to save the Major from the penitentiary!

ALICE (*gives him a quick look of fear, then firmly*). Not even to do that!

BULLARD (*sneeringly*). You're a pretty sort of a wife!

COREY (*pulls him aside*). Let her alone. If she *did* tell the Major, he'd spoil your pretty looks. (*Moves towards ALICE.*)

BULLARD (*laughing*). Taking her part, eh?

ALICE. I am going to my room, Corey. Tell the Major when he returns. [EXIT D. R.]

BULLARD. So the old man kicked her out!

COREY. She will not be driven. Women have to be coaxed, that's my experience.

BULLARD. Corey, you do not know anything. (*Moves towards him.*)

COREY (*looking at him with some resentment*). I know enough to respect a good woman, whether she is with us or not!

BULLARD. Is she good enough to stand by the Major? (*Pause*) You don't answer, eh?

COREY. It takes a woman to do the trick.

BULLARD. And on this particular occasion Alice is the woman.

ENTER the MAJOR D. C. and takes a seat at the table, in deep thought. They watch him closely.

COREY (*to BULLARD*). What will he do?

BULLARD. Just as we tell him. Follow my lead.

MAJOR (*to himself*). Gone from me forever!

BULLARD (*crosses c.*). Well, Major, what are you thinking about?

MAJOR. My own affairs, Bullard, they do not concern you.

BULLARD. Getting snappish, eh? They *might* concern me.

MAJOR (*with a quick glance of anger*). And I say they do not!

BULLARD. Well, don't look so gloomy about things. I have news for you now. Your wife has returned.

MAJOR (*earnestly*). Thank God for that!

BULLARD. He had nothing to do with it. Her father kicked her out, and came pretty near shooting you in the bargain.

MAJOR. Where is she now?

BULLARD. Asleep in her room. Wake her up!

MAJOR. The poor girl is tired and needs rest.

BULLARD. She's got no time for sleep now. Lutchenberg will be going home in a short time, so get her in line. (*To COREY*) Eh, Corey?

COREY. Bullard's right.

MAJOR (*eying them keenly*). Nothing will induce her to take part in this robbery. She yielded far enough to get Lutchenberg infatuated with her, and then the good in that girl mastered the evil. Now that she is with me again, I am going to protect, and not degrade her!

BULLARD (*confidently*). Oh, you'll change your mind about that, Major.

MAJOR (*rises and faces him*). What makes you think so?

BULLARD. Because there is too much at stake. Don't you suppose that Corey and I have something to say about this? Get your wife.

MAJOR. Leave her out of this. The game is between us three.

COREY. We can do nothing without her.

BULLARD. What is on your mind now?

MAJOR. Simply this. I am going to follow the advice of a good woman.

BULLARD (*to COREY*). I told you so, Corey. He's going to quit us. (*To the MAJOR*) We gave you the lead in everything, and now you'd throw us down!

COREY. Let us keep together, Major. You've got the

brain, and we've got the nerve. There's the proper combination,—you, Bullard and myself!

BULLARD. Your wife is the trick in this turn, and she's got to do her bit! (*To COREY*) Eh, Corey?

COREY. Bullard's right!

MAJOR (*looking BULLARD square in the eyes*). What makes you crow so loud?

BULLARD (*impudently*). Because I'm cock of the walk. The plan was to do Lutchenberg, but the combination will not work unless Mrs. Remming turns the key, which you will force her to do.

MAJOR. So you are cock of the walk. When I picked you and Corey out of the gutter, what were you then? Common pickpockets, that's what you were, feeding one day and starving the next, but never without the hand of the law on your shoulders. Well may Corey say you want a leader. I taught you both the game, put respectability on your backs, and diamonds in your shirt fronts. It was business, not pleasure, that bound us together, and our association is drawing to a close, boys. The key to this combination, is the key to my happiness, and I'm going to turn it in the right direction.

BULLARD (*snapping his fingers*). You're a crook, Major, and you can't live down the truth!

COREY. Stick to your pals, Major, and they'll stick to you!

BULLARD. He's got to stick.

MAJOR. Do you think I'm afraid of you, Bullard?

BULLARD. Why did you leave the West? Does that scare you?

MAJOR (*knocking him down*). No, you piker, a Westerner never fears a cur like you!

BULLARD (*pointing at him as he lies on the floor*). I'll pay you back for this! (*Rises and moves up L. c.*)

COREY (*to BULLARD*). You're not game, Bullard. I wouldn't take a blow like that!

MAJOR (*to COREY*). Cut that out, or I'll treat you the same!

COREY (*springing towards him*). Take that back, Major. I fought twenty battles in the ring, you'd stand no show with me!

MAJOR. So it's a case of who's the best man, eh? (*Moves to door L. and takes off his coat*) Step into this room, you pup, where we can fight without disturbing my wife.

[EXIT D. L.]

A Fight Against Fate.

COREY. You're game! I'll go with you!

(Takes off his coat and follows the MAJOR into the room off L. BULLARD draws near the door and watches the conflict, showing his interest by actions, as the sound of blows, and an occasional groan reaches the audience. COREY is knocked in L. through the door, and stumbles against BULLARD.)

COREY. By the Eternal! He can fight.

(Rushes off L. into the room again. The struggle is continued. At length the MAJOR comes in L. dragging COREY on his knees to C. COREY has a black eye, and shows other marks of the conflict. The MAJOR has a streak of red across his forehead.)

MAJOR. Who is the best man now, Corey?

COREY. You, Major, you licked me fair and square!

ENTER ALICE R. *as the MAJOR throws COREY aside, her hands raised in fear. The MAJOR embraces her. COREY rises and joins BULLARD.*

[EXIT COREY and BULLARD D. L.]

ALICE. Major, what has happened?

MAJOR. Nothing serious, dear, I was just teaching them a lesson.

ALICE. And this is the life I have returned to! Oh, Major, what is to become of us both. *(Moves down R.)*

MAJOR *(following her)*. Your father did not forgive, Alice?

ALICE. He will never forgive me. I have returned to you because I was penniless and homeless.

MAJOR *(in surprise)*. Penniless, Alice? You cannot say that. I've always given you plenty of money.

ALICE. But was it honest money? Answer me that question, Major.

MAJOR *(turning aside)*. I have never lied to you, Alice.

ALICE. I will give you credit for that, Major, but I repeat the question. Was it honest money? *(Pleadingly)* Was it, Major?

MAJOR. No. *(Turns to her)* But it would not be wrong for you to use it. *(Tenderly)* You did not let yourself want for anything, Alice?

ALICE. I have gone hungry, that is what I have done, Major, with your money in my pocket.

MAJOR *(embracing her quickly)*. My God! Alice.

ALICE. Oh, Major, let us struggle together to be honest. I will do my share, if you will keep the promise you made when I became your wife! (*Sits R. in tears.*)

MAJOR (*approaches her gently*). Alice! (*She looks up*) I swear by the memory of my mother that I will lead a good life from this hour. My greatest sin was in allowing you to enter my worthless life, but it seemed as if I could not live without you! (*Kneels to her*) Give me another chance, Alice, just one more chance! (*Bows his head on her knees in sorrow.*)

ALICE (*lays her hand gently on his head*). Yes, Major, I will give you another chance! (*BULLARD is heard laughing loudly. ALICE is disturbed.*) But those men, Major, what of them?

MAJOR (*rises*). It is all over between us. They are to go their way, and I mine.

ALICE. Bullard said he had found a way to make me obedient, to make me do my share of the work.

MAJOR (*glancing L. in anger*). The dog.

ALICE (*rises in fear*). Could he have learned of your escape from that penitentiary?

MAJOR (*more to himself*). He said he was cock of the walk! (*To ALICE*) Do not worry, dear, I have nothing to fear. Galloway is far off in the West. Bullard knows nothing about that. (*Embracing her cheerfully*) My first duty will be to win your father's forgiveness for you.

ALICE (*in a cheerful tone*). And perhaps we shall live in the old homestead some day, with father and Seth. (*The door bell rings.*) The bell! It may be some of my people, they know where to find me now. (*Goes to speaking tube*) Hello! who's there? (*Pause*) Yes, this is Mrs. Remming. (*Pause*) Who? Seth! (*To MAJOR*) It is Seth, our best friend! (*Speaks through the tube*) Come right up, Seth, the Major is here. (*Waits near D. C.*)

MAJOR (*crossing down L.*). Her old sweetheart. I wonder what he will have to say?

ENTER SETH D. C.

SETH. Alice.

ALICE (*greeting him warmly*). Seth! It is so good of you to come. (*Leads him down c.*) Let me introduce you to my husband. (*To the MAJOR*) Major, this is Seth Rutherford, a lifelong friend of mine.

MAJOR (*offering his hand*). Will you take my hand, Mr. Rutherford?

A Fight Against Fate.

SETH (*taking his hand in a firm clasp*). With all my heart.

ALICE. Did you bring any news of my father, Seth?

SETH. No, we parted in anger. I followed you because I believed that you needed my protection.

ALICE. The Major and I have come to a perfect understanding, Seth. I shall not leave him again.

SETH (*hesitating a little*). I have something to say to your husband, Alice. Would you mind leaving us alone for just a few minutes?

MAJOR. You may speak in her presence, Mr. Rutherford, I conceal nothing from my wife.

ALICE. It's all right, Seth. I know that it is something good, even though you don't wish me to hear it. [EXIT R.]

MAJOR (*offering a chair*). Be seated, Mr. Rutherford. (*They sit facing each other*) I can almost guess what is on your mind, and to make the matter easier for us both, I want you to let things go by their proper names.

SETH. I wish to help you, Major Remming, but I must ask plain questions to make my object clear. It is not my intention to interfere in a man's private affairs, but I claim the right to protect a good woman from sin.

MAJOR. Do not torture me, Rutherford, I would give my miserable life to make her happy! (*Bows his head.*)

SETH. Will you lead an honest life? That will make her happy, and I will help you.

MAJOR (*rises and looks at him*). You, Rutherford, help me!

SETH (*rises*). Yes, I! No man could win her love unless there was good in him somewhere.

MAJOR (*taking his hand, and speaking in a very sincere way*). You are the first man that ever came to me with his heart in the right place.

ENTER ALICE R.

ALICE. Well, have you finished? If so come in and have a little luncheon. (*Moves down c.*)

SETH (*to ALICE*). The Major and I are going to be brothers.

ALICE. He will find you the best brother that ever lived. (*Takes his hand.*)

SETH. I will try to prove that, Alice.

ALICE (*giving a hand to each*). Come.

MAJOR. You dear girl.

[EXIT ALICE D. R. followed by MAJOR and SETII. ENTER BULLARD and COREY L. as the door bell rings.

BULLARD. That may be Lutchenberg! (*Goes to the speaking tube.*)

COREY (*who has removed all signs of the conflict except the black eye*). It's too early for him.

BULLARD (*using the speaking tube*). Hello! Who's there? (*Pause*) Oliver Budd, and Sue? I don't know you.

COREY Get wise! It's the kid and Sue, the country rosebud.

BULLARD. We don't want them here.

COREY. They came to see the Major's wife. Invite them up.

BULLARD (*using the speaking tube*). Hello! Come upstairs. (*Turns to COREY*) My, but you've got a pretty black eye! (*Sits down R.*)

COREY. I only got what was coming to me.

BULLARD. You're welcome to it.

ENTER OLIVER and SUE D. C., dressed in loud colors, OLIVER is intoxicated, and wears an extremely large red tie.

SUE (*leads OLIVER down C. in distress*). Oliver's gone and made a holy show of me. He insisted that every saloon we passed was a soda fountain, and went inside to get a glass of sarsaparilla!

OLIVER (*in a drunken voice*). That's all I had. Didn't I ask you to come with me?

SUE. How could I go into a saloon?

OLIVER. Didn't I go in, and I came out, too. I don't get to New York every day, and I'm going to have a good time while I'm here. (*To COREY*) Can you direct me to a place where the chorus girls do high kicking?

SUE (*covering her face*). Oliver, I'm ashamed of you. (*Sits L.*)

OLIVER (*staggers R. and becomes seated behind BULLARD*). Durn me if I don't feel sleepy. (*Falls asleep*)

SUE. We came to visit Alice, and he goes and gets drunk, and flirts with every girl he meets. (*Crying*) I wouldn't care, but it's up to me to get him home again, and I don't see how I'm going to do it.

COREY (*comes to her*). Don't cry, Sue. I'll take care of him.

SUE. I don't want Alice to see him in that condition. Where is she now?

COREY. In the dining-room with the Major and a friend. I'll tell her you are here. (*Moves*)

SUE. No, don't do that. When I'm gone, just say that I called with Oliver, and say that he had an attack of appendicitis, and that I had to rush him off to the doctor.

COREY. All right, Sue. (*Pause*) Do you know, Sue, I think a great deal about you. (*Glances at BULLARD, who nods his head for him to go on.*)

SUE. Do you?

COREY (*encouraged by signs from BULLARD, falls on his knees*). Eyes like twinkling electric lights. Teeth like the gleaming billiard ball. Form like the thoroughbred steed. Voice like the megaphone, I love thou.

SUE (*in a very sarcastic voice*). Put on the brakes, you're losing a wheel! (*Rises and crosses c.*)

COREY (*rising*). Sue, what's the matter?

BULLARD (*laughing*). Corey, you didn't do it right.

OLIVER (*waking up*). Who said I was full of cider. (*Grabs BULLARD around the neck, and pulls him over on the floor*) Did you say it?

SUE (*pulling OLIVER to c.*). Please don't hurt him, Oliver.

BULLARD (*rising*). Better take him home, he's drunk.

OLIVER. Where did you get the funeral mark?

COREY. Why, do you want one?

OLIVER. No, I'd like to steer clear of that place. (*To SUE*) Isn't it a peach!

SUE (*pulling him*). Come on home.

OLIVER. Not until I've seen Alice.

SUE. You'll come home right now! (*Rushes him c.*)

EXIT both C. D. COREY joins BULLARD down R. SETH appears at door R. and listens to their conversation)

BULLARD (*looking at his watch*). Why don't they get rid of their visitor. Lutchenberg may ring the bell any moment. This honest wife of the Major will do my bidding, mark my words!

SETH (*moving to D. C.*). Good evening, gentlemen.

COREY and BULLARD. Good evening.

BULLARD (*aside to COREY*). He's going!

SETH (*aside*). They are up to some game!

ENTER MAJOR and ALICE D. R. and cross to SETH.

ALICE (*taking SETH's hand*). Good-bye, Seth!

SETH. I'll call again to-morrow, Alice. Good-bye, Major.

MAJOR. Good-bye, Seth!

[EXIT SETH, *after giving a quick glance at COREY and BULLARD.*

BULLARD. Who is your friend, Major?

MAJOR. Seth Rutherford, one of the few really good men I have met.

BULLARD. The fellow who told us to go while our lives were safe, eh?

(*The door bell rings. They exchange quick glances. BULLARD moves towards the telephone. ALICE goes to the speaking tube. The door bell rings again.*)

MAJOR. See who it is, Alice.

ALICE (*using the speaking tube*). Hello, who's there? (*Pause*) Mr. Lutchenberg! (*Turns to the MAJOR with a look of appeal.*)

MAJOR (*firmly*). Tell him your husband is at home, and that he must not annoy you again.

BULLARD (*in a threatening tone*). Don't answer Lutchenberg until you've listened to me. (*ALICE stops in fear. He uses the telephone*) Hello! Give me 196 please. (*Pause. The door bell rings again. To ALICE*) Wait, before you answer! (*Using the telephone*) Hello! Is this Sheriff Galloway? Good! Hold the wire, Galloway. (*Looks at the MAJOR and ALICE.*)

MAJOR (*in fear, to BULLARD*). Is he in New York? (*The door bell rings again.*)

BULLARD. Yes, and unless she tells Lutchenberg to come upstairs, I'll tell Galloway where he can get you!

MAJOR. You traitor!

ALICE (*in fear*). Major, what shall I do?

MAJOR (*firmly*). Tell Lutchenberg to go, and let Galloway come.

ALICE. No, no, I can't give you up!

BULLARD (*to ALICE*). Decide quick! (*Uses the telephone*) Hello, Galloway! (*To ALICE*) After this job, Corey and I will never bother you or the Major again, and Galloway will never know.

(*The door bell rings again.*)

ALICE (*appeals to the MAJOR*). Major, decide for me.

MAJOR. I said I would never ask you to do wrong again, and will keep my word! (*Looking sternly at BULLARD*) Tell Lutchenberg to go, and let Galloway come.

BULLARD (*at the telephone*). Hello, Galloway!

ALICE (*to BULLARD*). Stop! I will do it.

BULLARD (*to ALICE*). Then tell him to come upstairs.

ALICE (*using the speaking tube*). You may come upstairs, Mr. Lutchenberg. (*Looks at BULLARD*)

BULLARD (*using the telephone*). Hello, Galloway! (*Pause*) If I'm not too busy, Galloway, I'll drop down your way later in the evening. Good-bye. (*Hangs up the receiver, and turns to the MAJOR and ALICE.*)

ALICE (*placing hands on the MAJOR's shoulders*). You are trying to do right, Major, but they will not let you.

BULLARD. It will soon be over, then you can take the Major, and live as you please! (*Moves with COREY to door R.*)

MAJOR (*now alert and determined*). No violence is to be used, and the money divided equally.

BULLARD. Agreed! [EXIT with COREY, D. R.]

ALICE. My purpose was to protect you, not to rob Lutchenberg!

MAJOR. Trust me, Alice, I will return our share to Lutchenberg. These men have me in their power for the present, or I would not let you make this sacrifice for me. God bless you for what you are doing.

ALICE. He is coming. Go!

(*The MAJOR goes to room R., turning in the entrance, and showing by his actions that he is willing to let her renounce the idea of saving him. She bids him go with a gesture.*) [EXIT MAJOR, D. R.]

ALICE. It is to save him from prison. (*Moves down L. and takes a seat at right of the table.*)

ENTER LUTCHENBERG, D. C., *carrying a large bag.*

LUTCHENBERG. Good evening, Mrs. Remming. (*Moving down L.*) I've waited a long time for this invitation. (*Takes seat at L. of table*) Why did you ever marry a travelling man, to be left all alone at nights?

ALICE (*with suppressed emotion*). Women make many mistakes in their lives, Mr. Lutchenberg.

LUTCHENBERG. I'm sorry that I can only stay a few minutes, Mrs. Remming. There is a policeman waiting for me down at the door, and—

ALICE (*interrupting him*). A policeman, Mr. Lutchenberg? (*Conceals her horror*)

LUTCHENBERG. Sure! I need somebody to protect me.

This bag contains a fortune. (*Reaches over and takes her hand*) Vy you're as pale as a ghost. Vot is the matter?

ALICE (*turning her face away*). Nothing, Mr. Lutchenberg. I do not feel well, that is all!

LUTCHENBERG. You stay in the house too much, my dear Mrs. Remming. Come to the theatre mit me this evening, and enjoy yourself a leetle. Your husband is away, and vill never know.

ALICE (*looking away from him*). Are you not afraid to carry so much money with you, Mr. Lutchenberg? Do you see no risk in coming to see me?

LUTCHENBERG. Vy should I? You wouldn't rob me. Your face is too good and honest. Ah, I know who to trust. (*In confidence*) I'll tell you vy I carry the money home mit me every night. The bank is being robbed systematically, and I'm afraid to leave too much ready cash over night, for fear they would take it all. Ven ve locate the thief, vich I believe is von of the clerks, I can leave the money in the safe mit out fear, but for the present it is safer in my home. (*Takes her hand again*) Vot do you say to a nice evening together. Theatre, supper and music. I would do anything to make the time pleasant for you vile your husband is on the road. (*Waits a few moments for her to answer*) Say vere you vill meet me to-night, and let me go now. I can't keep the officer vaiting. He might think I am being robbed and come after me. Come, give me your answer.

ALICE (*rises with a sudden outburst of grief*). I cannot do it.

LUTCHENBERG. Vy not? Other vomen do.

ALICE. For God's sake go, Mr. Lutchenberg, before it is too late. (*Sinks on her knees, covering her face with her hands*)

LUTCHENBERG (*rises excited, with the bag in his hand*). Vy! Is your husband coming?

(BULLARD, COREY and the MAJOR ENTER R. quickly, and move to R. C. They are all masked, and BULLARD points a revolver at LUTCHENBERG.)

BULLARD. Don't move or cry out, you are in the power of desperate men.

(SETH appears in D. C. Takes a revolver from his pocket, and watches them unnoticed.)

LUTCHENBERG (*with courage*). So, it's a plot to rob me, and that poor woman is the dupe. This money represents

the saving of hard-working men and women, and I'll fight for it with every drop of my blood!

BULLARD. Make one move, and you're a dead man. (*To the MAJOR and COREY*) Bind him hand and foot. (*They move to obey.*)

SETH (*moves down C. pointing his revolver*). I'll kill the man who lays a hand on him. This robbery shall not take place.

(*They turn in fear to look at the intruder. LUTCHENBERG taking advantage of the respite thus gained, smashes the lamp quickly with his bag, and continues calling "Police! Police!" In the darkened room a desperate struggle is heard, and the forms are dimly seen moving about.*)

BULLARD. Get the bag, Corey!

COREY. I've got it! (*The struggle continues a few minutes, and he is heard again*) Damnation! It's gone.

MAJOR. The police! Alice, follow me!

[EXIT MAJOR quickly R. with BULLARD and COREY.]

(*Centre door is swung open, and a light is thrown upon the scene. The policeman is revealed standing between SETH and ALICE, with his hands on their shoulders. Seth is on the left of the officer, next to LUTCHENBERG, and is holding the bag.*)

SETH (*giving the bag to LUTCHENBERG*). I did my duty. Sir, have pity on this poor girl. She is not to blame!

LUTCHENBERG (*after a struggle to decide*). If that woman is your friend, I have no charge to make! Officer, let them go.

[EXIT OFFICER D. C. followed by LUTCHENBERG, who turns in the doorway to look at them. ALICE falls, half fainting, against SETH.]

SETH (*placing his arms around her*). You are not a thief yet, Alice, thank God, you are not a thief.

(*The curtain is almost down when BULLARD, COREY and the MAJOR creep guiltily into the room, and look at SETH and ALICE.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Sitting-room in the SUMMERS' homestead. Next evening. Doors R. L. and C. of rear flat. Table and chairs down R. Lighted lamp on table. Chair down L. Gun against the wall near D. C. DISCOVERED JUDSON seated at table R. with a letter from ALICE in his hand.*

ENTER SUE D. L. *quietly and stops to listen.*

JUDSON (*reads in a broken voice*). "Dear Father.—Forgive me and take me back. The man I married is an escaped convict. I cannot live with him and be a good woman. Seth will forgive me, I know. Will you not be kind to your unhappy child? Send Seth for me.—Alice."

SUE (*crosses and places her arm around his neck*). The daughter's love is stronger than the father's. She will come back, and love you just the same.

JUDSON (*hopefully*). Do you believe that, Sue?

SUE. Consider the matter settled. Alice is coming home!

(ENTER OLIVER D. L. *and looks at them. His head is bandaged and he looks very sick. Sits down L.*)

JUDSON (*joyfully*). You saw her yesterday. She said she would come. (*Pause, then anxiously*) Why, don't you answer.

SUE (*a little embarrassed*). You see, it was this way. (*Glances at OLIVER*)

OLIVER (*shaking his finger at her*). Don't you give me away, or I'll eat up all your pie!

SUE (*to OLIVER*). You must have had a great time.

OLIVER. I did. (*Feels sickness coming on*) [EXIT D. L.]

SUE (*moving L.*). I wonder where he got his sporting blood? (*Crying*) And he was saving up to buy a new suit so that we could get married.

JUDSON (*looking up*). What are you crying about, Sue?

ENTER OLIVER *and sits down L. During SUE's recital he motions to her in vain to keep quiet.*

SUE (*turns to look at OLIVER, and in response to his motions, sticks her tongue out at him*). Do you know what caused Oliver to be so sick all day? (*Turns to JUDSON*)

OLIVER. I had the earache.

SUE (*to OLIVER*). You will before I get through. (*To JUDSON*) He got drunk in New York yesterday, and that is why we could not see Alice.

JUDSON (*surprised*). Oliver, drunk?

SUE. I had to come home alone last night.

JUDSON. But where was Oliver?

SUE. I left him on a street corner fighting with a policeman. He didn't get home until 3.30 this morning.

OLIVER (*feeling his head*). Won't somebody get me a bromo seltzer?

SUE. Don't you feel any regret?

OLIVER (*rubbing his stomach*). I feel something, but I'm not sure what it is.

SUE. What did the policeman do with you?

OLIVER. He let me go, when he found I was a democrat.

SUE. How much money have you left?

OLIVER. Two cents!

SUE. Where did you spend it all?

JUDSON. Tell the truth. Oliver. What did you do with the twenty-five dollars, and where did you go?

OLIVER. Well, when Sue left me, the cop and I went and had a drink together, then I walked to Alice's house, and met the prize-fighter just as he was coming out. That's all! (*Turns away smiling at the recollection of the good time he had*) He's a good fellow when you know him.

JUDSON. I hope you didn't go into any bad places.

OLIVER (*positively*). Oh, no. There was a lot of ladies in one place, and you never met such nice people, come right up to you and ask you to buy them a drink. That place was all right. They give you a glass of (*Starts to say beer, and checks himself*) Sarsaparilla that big for a nickel. (*Shows the size of the glass with his hands*)

SUE. What other places did you go to?

OLIVER. Well, we went to a burlesque show, but they put me out of the theatre for something.

SUE. Put you out!

OLIVER. Yes, but Corey and I went to the box office and demanded our money back. (*Pause*) But we didn't get it.

SUE. Paid for something you didn't get.

OLIVER. But we got even. Corey hit the man in the box office and gave him the nose bleed, (*laughing*) and he couldn't get out, as he was locked in. (*A pain strikes him in the head suddenly, while he is laughing, and stops him.*)

SUE. Then what did you do?

OLIVER. We ran like wild with three policemen after us.

SUE. Of course they caught you? What then?

OLIVER. We all went and had a drink. They were democrats too, and Corey belonged to the same club. Those New York cops are all right, if you are a democrat.

JUDSON. Was this Corey with you all the time?

OLIVER (*with animation*). You bet!

JUDSON. You were fortunate to have enough left for train fare.

SUE. How did you get home?

OLIVER (*in tones of repentance*). On a local freight train.

JUDSON. Oliver, you could never withstand the temptations of city life. (*Crosses to D. L. and turns to look at him*) Came home on a freight train.

[EXIT JUDSON, D. L., *laughing*. Followed by SUE, *in anger*.

OLIVER (*rises and sits down again with a groan, feeling his head*). Gee, but I'm nervous. I wonder how Corey feels. (*Crosses to the table slowly, and picks up a letter*) Hello, here's a letter for me. (*Reads the letter*) "Mr. Oliver Budd.—Do not fail to be on hand Sunday morning for practice. In the afternoon we play the Cabbage Growers' Association, and you must pitch the game of your life. The contest is for five barrels of potatoes—the winning team to get the prize. We have decided to raise the price of admission one cent, which will make admission for gentlemen three cents, ladies free, if they will come. The money taken in is to be donated to the fund which is being raised to build a new steeple on the church. It will be easy to build the steeple, if we can build the funds. Don't fail to bring along some strong thread and a needle, as the ball will need repairing before the game is over. The game will not be umpired, as Sunday is a bad day, and swearing will not be allowed. We must win by fair means or foul to get those potatoes.—Obadiah Spuddles, Captain."

ENTER COREY and BULLARD D. C. and move down c.

COREY. Hello, kid! How do you feel to-day?

OLIVER (*shaking hands with him*). Hello, Corey, how do you feel?

COREY. Fine as silk. Did you get home all right?

OLIVER. Sure. Did you?

COREY. Yes, but I was worried about you, kid. Didn't

know whether you got home safe or not, so Bullard and I thought we'd run down here to make sure.

OLIVER. Glad to see you both. Sit down, Mr. Bullard.

BULLARD (*sits down L.*). By the way, Oliver, I hope the old gentleman won't try any more rifle practice.

COREY (*feeling OLIVER's head*). What's the matter with your skull, kid? You're not used to having a good time.

(COREY and BULLARD *move up stage*. COREY *takes a flask of whiskey out of his pocket. Drinks from the flask, and hands it to BULLARD, who drinks also.*)

ENTER SUE D. L., and watches them unseen.

OLIVER. Sue wouldn't give me a drop of anything. She's a darn crank.

COREY. If you love the girl, why don't you marry her?

OLIVER. Got no money. She'd have to live on Quaker Oats if she married me.

COREY. I wish she would marry me.

OLIVER. You can have her.

SUE (*advancing*). You haven't got me yet, Mr. Oliver Budd! (*They turn quickly*) What are you drinking?

COREY. The kid was drunk last night, and he wanted a bracer bad.

(OLIVER *kicks him slyly to make him keep quiet.*)

SUE. I wash my hands of him entirely. He is a disgrace to this community. (*Sits down R.*)

OLIVER (*to COREY*). Go on, talk to her, and try to square me.

COREY. Talk to Sue. With pleasure. (*Gets a chair and sits close to SUE. BULLARD rises and goes to OLIVER up stage. OLIVER keeps an eye on the actions of SUE and COREY, and gives signs of jealousy during the conversation.*)

SUE (*greeting COREY warmly*). I'm so glad to see you again.

COREY (*fondling her hand*). I couldn't keep away from you, Sue. Say, do I stand any show? The kid's all right, but he couldn't support a couple of canary birds. May be he could feed you on Quaker Oats. You'll die an old maid if you wait for him.

SUE. Are you sure that you could support a wife?

COREY (*letting the words slip*). Sure, I've done it before! (*Claps his hand on his mouth quickly.*)

SUE (*in surprise*). What! you've supported a wife before? (*Tries to pull away.*)

COREY (*recovering himself*). No, it was my brother's wife, I meant. He didn't use her right and I thought that it was my duty to support her and the baby.

SUE. You told me that you had neither brother nor sister.

COREY (*confused*). Did I? That's right. (*With confidence*) I meant my brother-in-law. (*Becomes confused, realizing that he has blundered again.*)

SUE (*drawing away*). If you have neither brother nor sister how could it be your brother-in-law? (*Rises and draws away from him.*)

COREY (*to himself, disgusted*). I'm a wise one. (*COREY rises. OLIVER comes down c. SUE meets him and slaps his face.*)

SUE. Live on Quaker Oats, will I? Not much!

[EXIT D. L.]

(COREY meets OLIVER c.)

OLIVER. I told you to square me, not queer me!

[EXIT D. L.]

BULLARD (*to COREY*). Lying is an art, my boy, at which you would never make a success.

COREY. What is your next move?

BULLARD. That is a sensible question. Our next move will be to separate the Major and his wife. Her father must take her back and he must come with us.

COREY. To plan the deals?

BULLARD. Exactly. With the Major as a leader, the game is sure. Without him, we could scarcely make a living, and keep clear of the police.

COREY. Why did you bring Galloway down here?

BULLARD. To block the Major's little game. To-night he means to give us the slip. (*Laughing softly*) If we let him. (*Sternly*) Corey, follow my lead without question. Galloway is getting suspicious and playing his game, too. If the Major refuses to keep his agreement with us, I can hold this sheriff off no longer.

COREY. Won't he recognize the Major if he sees him?

BULLARD. No, in the West the Major wore a mustache and beard, and lived under an assumed name.

(*They move to c. d. and COREY looks off r.*)

COREY. Hello, here comes that fellow they call Seth.

BULLARD. We had better keep out of his way for the present.

[EXIT BOTH D. C.]

ENTER SUE, L.

SUE. Why, they have gone. I must go and tell Oliver.
[EXIT D. L.]

ENTER SETH, D. C. *and walks slowly to the table, where he sits in deep thought.*

SETH. I wonder how it will all end?

ENTER JUDSON, D. L. *and crosses to C.*

JUDSON. Seth!

SETH (*looking up*). Judson! (*Approaches him.*)

JUDSON (*placing his hand on SETH's shoulder*). She can never be anything to you, Seth, but for the sake of old times, help me to save her from that scoundrel.

SETH (*turns away. Aside*). I told Alice I would plead for him, and I will keep my word.

JUDSON (*in fear*). Seth, where is Alice? Did you not follow her?

SETH. She is with her husband.

ENTER MAJOR and ALICE D. C. *and move down a little.*

JUDSON (*in anger*). She returned to—him!

SETH. Yes, because in that man there is some good, and I want you to forgive him as she has done.

JUDSON. I will take my girl back, but that man must not come here.

SETH. She will never return unless you welcome both.

JUDSON (*sternly*). Is that my girl's choice? (*Moves L.*)

ALICE (*moves down C.*). Father!

JUDSON (*embracing her quickly*). Alice! I knew you would come back to me. (*Observes the MAJOR*) But I did not think you would return with that man. (*Moves L. again*) (*MAJOR moves down and places his arm around ALICE.*)

ALICE. Father, let your judgment be merciful, and give my husband a chance to speak for himself. He has come to do his duty for my sake. (*Lays her head on the MAJOR's breast*) Poor Major.

JUDSON. If he would do his duty, let him go and leave you in peace.

ALICE. My heart will follow him no matter where he goes.

SETH. Spoken like a true woman.

MAJOR (*to JUDSON*). Whatever my faults may be, Mr. Summers, I love your daughter, and I come to you as a man, knowing my own unworthiness, to ask you to take her back. I thought that I could bury the past, with the clear sun of a woman's devotion to guide my steps. But a man's sins will

find him out, as they have found *me*. Give me a chance for redemption, and protect my little girl, until I return to claim her.

JUDSON. One question, Mr. Remming. What right have you to the title of Major?

MAJOR. A soldier's right, as the records of the War Department will prove. After the war I drifted back to the old life, and evil companions. From my infancy I was cast among men who knew no law of God or man. When I met Alice, she brought the good in me to the surface, but I had gone too far.

ALICE. Don't say that, Major. Fate is to blame, for anything you have done.

MAJOR (*embracing her tenderly*). Don't ask her to forget me entirely, for the thought of her will give me strength to be a better man.

JUDSON. What you are doing, Major Remming, is at least the act of a man. I will not attempt to judge you by your past life, but will you swear that henceforth you will live as all honest men live, trusting in your fellow man, and in God!

MAJOR. I swear that every act of my future life will be clean and honorable, for her sake. I am going far away, to start in right.

JUDSON (*advances*). I believe you, and your place shall be by her side. (*Clasps his hand*) Make this your home, and I will help you to do right.

(BULLARD and COREY appear in D. C. and move down a little.)

BULLARD. Well, are you going to keep us waiting all day?

ALICE (*looks pleadingly at SETH*). Seth, what shall we do?

(The MAJOR listens with a set, determined face.)

SETH. Bullard, the Major is not going back to New York to-night.

BULLARD. And why not?

SETH. Because he is going to make his home with us.

BULLARD. Oh, oh! A sort of prodigal son. (*To COREY*) Eh, Corey?

MAJOR (*facing BULLARD C.*). Bullard, I told you that we would have to part. Now go your way, and let me go mine!

BULLARD. You are coming back with us, Major. Country life would not agree with you, you'd tire of it in less than a week, and then you might not find Corey and me.

MAJOR. I have no further use for you or Corey, so do not miss your train on my account.

COREY. The agreement was to stand together, Major.

BULLARD. Let me deal with him, Corey. *(To the MAJOR)* So you are determined to dissolve the partnership without our consent, eh?

MAJOR. This is no place for an argument. Go! *(Goes to ALICE, and moves with her to the table. SETH moves up L. c.)*

ALICE. Bullard, is there no manhood in you!

JUDSON. Alice, what power has this man over your husband?

BULLARD *(shaking his finger at the MAJOR)*. So you'd turn us out, eh! Well, I'll give your pedigree to your dear father-in-law for you.

JUDSON. I want no information from you, sir. Leave my house!

BULLARD. Not until I've told you what he is!

COREY. Give him another chance.

BULLARD *(to the MAJOR)*. Either come with Corey and me, or go with Galloway, who is waiting outside. Now choose!

MAJOR *(in fear)*. Galloway! *(Sinks in the chair in despair. ALICE sinks at his knees.)*

ALICE. Major!

BULLARD. Well, Major, which is it to be? Corey and me, or Galloway? *(Train is heard approaching)* Here comes the train. Decide quick!

SETH *(facing BULLARD)*. You cur. When a man is driven to the wall, give him a chance.

BULLARD *(to SETH)*. This is not your affair.

SETH. He is trying to lead a good life, and you are clinging to his heels like a pair of vultures, afraid that you will starve without his brain to lead you.

(Train is heard getting nearer.)

BULLARD *(in anger)*. He's wanted by the law, and by God I'll give him up! *(Goes to D. c. and calls out)* Ho! Galloway! Galloway!

SETH *follows him and picks up rifle which is resting against the wall, near the door. With a swift movement, he places the barrel against BULLARD'S side. JUDSON gets between COREY and the door, on left.)*

GALLOWAY *(from without)*. Hello! hello! Here comes the train.

SETH (*with determination*). Tell him to take that train!
(*Train is heard to stop nearby.*)

(BULLARD *looks down at the rifle, and then at SETH, in whose eyes and manner he reads the determination to kill if he refuses to obey.*)

BULLARD (*in terror*). Take the train for New York, Galloway. I will meet you at the hotel to-night.

GALLOWAY (*from without*). All right, Bullard. Good-bye.

(*The sound of a train starting is heard. SETH and BULLARD hold their positions. COREY makes a move towards the door, and is confronted by JUDSON.*)

COREY (*to BULLARD*). Get the Sheriff. Stand by the girl!

JUDSON. I will stand by the girl. (*Holding COREY by the shoulders*) You do not leave this room.

COREY (*raising his hand*). Get out of my way.

ALICE (*from her position points a revolver quickly at COREY*) Corey, raise your hand against my father at your peril!

(*The train is heard departing as the curtain descends.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*Same as in ACT III. Three months later, Sunday morning. The table is laid for breakfast. A church is supposed to be nearby; the choir is at early practice and organ and voices are heard off stage singing the first verse of "Lead Kindly Light."*

ENTER OLIVER C. D. and stops listening to the hymn until the end.

OLIVER. They might have waited until people got out of bed, and not reminded them of their sins at this hour of the morning. (*Moves towards the table*) I wonder what Sue will say when she finds the coffee made, and breakfast all ready.

ENTER SETH D. C.

SETH. Good morning, Oliver.

OLIVER. Hello, Seth! Just got up?

SETH (*going down c.*). Yes, just got up.

OLIVER. We play the Cabbage Growers' Association again to-day.

SETH. Oliver, Christians go to church on Sunday. So should you.

OLIVER. It's the best nine that stands the show, even there.

SETH. How do you expect to win Sue, unless you try to be good?

OLIVER. If a fellow wants to be good, he doesn't have to try very hard. (*Rises*) I don't like country life, Seth, and I'm going to leave the farm.

SETH. When do you expect to go, Oliver?

OLIVER. Possibly in a few days. I want to tell you a secret, Seth. I'm going with one of the big leagues. The manager tried me out, and he said he would soon develop me into a first-class player.

SETH (*shaking his hand*). I thought they would get you before long! (*Regretfully*) But the old home will be lonesome without us. I, too, am going away.

OLIVER. But what will Alice say? She will be lonely without you.

SETH. She is happy with the Major, and will soon forget me.

(SUE is heard off L.)

OLIVER. Here comes Sue. Let's hide and watch her surprise. (*Slaps him on the back*) Brace up, Seth, the woman that a man loses, is never so good but what there is another just as good to take her place. (*They pass out through c. d. and watch SUE from the outside.*)

ENTER SUE D. L.

SUE. If I didn't get up folks around here would starve, and I've got to eat myself, as well (*sits at the table*) or perhaps I wouldn't get up so early.

OLIVER (*in the doorway L.*). Boo!

SUE (*rises in fear*). What was that? (*Discovers the table ready for breakfast*) What on earth does this all mean, breakfast ready.

OLIVER. Boo! (*Comes down c.*)

ENTER SETH D. L. and sits down L.

SUE. So it was you.

OLIVER. Oh, I was up at four o'clock.

SUE. Well, when you get up at four on Sunday morning, something is going to happen.

OLIVER. I want to play ball to-day, Sue, to raise funds for the new steeple. When I say "All in favor of letting me play ball," will you stand by me?

SUE. For the new steeple, yes.

SETH. Good morning, Sue.

SUE. Good morning, Seth.

SETH (*to OLIVER*). Did you tell her the news, Oliver?

SUE. What news?

SETH. Oliver is going to leave the farm, Sue. He has signed a contract to go with one of the big teams in the city.

OLIVER. Sue doesn't know what big team means.

SUE. Yes, I do. You're going to drive one of those big brewery wagons that we saw in the city. If I couldn't get a better job than that, I'd stay on the farm.

OLIVER. Sue, I told you that I'd get a chance some day with one of the big baseball teams, and I've got it at last.

SUE. Good for Oliver! (*Embraces him.*)

OLIVER. Then you won't mind me going, Sue?

SUE. No, but you won't forget me, Oliver?

OLIVER (*embracing her*). You know I won't forget you, Sue!

SUE. Well, ring the bell for breakfast. (*She busies herself about the table. To SETH*) Are you hungry, Seth?

SETH. No, I had my breakfast some time ago.

OLIVER. Well, have another. (*Rings the bell which he has taken from the table*) I never miss a meal any more than I do a ball. (*Sits at the table facing the audience.*)

SUE (*sits at the table*). High ball or base ball?

OLIVER. Baseball.

ENTER JUDSON D. L.

JUDSON. Good morning, my children. (*Sits at the table*)

OLIVER (*aside*). Children! He doesn't know I've signed with the league.

JUDSON (*observes SETH*). Good morning, Seth, come and sit at the table, boy.

SETH. I've had my breakfast, Judson, thank you.

OLIVER. Come on, Seth, try my coffee.

ENTER ALICE D. L.

ALICE. Good morning everybody. (*Observes SETH, and greets him with both hands*) Good morning, Seth.

A Fight Against Fate.

SETH. Good morning, Mrs. Remming.

ALICE (*with a look of reproach*). Alice, you mean. Always Alice to you, Seth.

JUDSON. Bring him to the table, Alice.

ALICE (*pulling him*). Come, Seth, breakfast is ready.

SETH. Well, if you insist. (*Goes to table with ALICE, and becomes seated*) I'll try some of Oliver's coffee.

OLIVER. You'll never regret it.

JUDSON. Where is the Major? He is usually the first at the table.

ENTER MAJOR, D. L.

MAJOR. Good morning, everybody. (*Shaking hands with SETH*) Good morning, Seth. (*Sits next to ALICE. They proceed with the breakfast.*)

JUDSON (*pulling a wry face*). This coffee is strong enough to kill a horse.

OLIVER. I think it is fine. Another cup, please.

SUE. Good heavens. Look at the eggs, they are just like bullets!

OLIVER. That's right, kick! A fellow tries to be chief cook and bottle washer, and then you find fault.

JUDSON. And the sausage is burned to a crisp!

SUE. Don't blame me. Oliver got the breakfast ready this morning.

ALL. Oliver did!

OLIVER. Yes, Oliver did. I was up at four o'clock.

ALL. Four o'clock.

OLIVER. Yes, four o'clock. All those in favor of letting me play ball to-day will kindly raise their hands!

(*They all raise their hands, except JUDSON, who looks at them in surprise.*)

OLIVER. The vote is unanimous. Oliver plays ball. (*Falls asleep with a sausage in his mouth.*)

JUDSON. This looks more like a debating society, than a quiet family breakfast.

SETH. This doughnut is as hard as a door-knob!

SUE. Look at him. Asleep with a sausage in his mouth. Oliver, wake up.

OLIVER (*wakes and finishes eating the sausage*). This sausage tastes more like a cinder, one of those things you get in your eye from a locomotive. (*Rises*) Excuse me. I'm through, [EXIT D. R.]

JUDSON. This looks more like an assortment of hardware, than a breakfast.

SUE (*crying*). Well, he did his best, and you're all picking on him. I don't think it's fair.

JUDSON (*holding up a sausage with his fork*). Look at this sausage!

SUE. Well, you don't have to eat it!

JUDSON (*holding up a biscuit*). And look at these biscuits, more like clinkers from a furnace! (*Laughing*) It's all right, Sue. Oliver is a good boy, and his breakfast was quite a novelty. (*Rises*) Now I must go and look over the farm, to see that everything is all right.

(*They all rise. SUE and ALICE clear the table and carry the things into inner room. SETH sits L. and lights his pipe. The MAJOR moves to C. and lights a cigar. JUDSON looks at him a few moments and then goes to him.*)

JUDSON. Major, I have something of importance to say to you this morning. I want you to accept a position of trust in the Farmer's Bank. Our present cashier will leave us in a few days, and Seth and I have decided that you are the man for the place.

MAJOR (*taken by surprise*). You would trust me with that position, knowing how I have lived in the past? No! No, Mr. Summers! I am not ungrateful enough to let you do that for me.

(*COREY and BULLARD appear in D. C., listen a few moments, and then withdraw unseen.*)

JUDSON. Regret is the indication of a man's better nature, but it is courage that wins, my boy. You have entered a new life, with true friends by your side, and they will not let you fall again. (*Goes up stage*) I must be going now. Seth will tell you anything you wish to know. [EXIT D. C.

MAJOR. Seth, you have done this for me. But something tells me that my happiness will be short-lived. The old score is against me. (*Sits R.*)

(*SETH crosses to C. ALICE appears in doorway L. and listens a few moments.*)

SETH. Don't give way to your thoughts, Major. Think of Alice.

ALICE (*moves to SETH*). Talking about me, Seth? Now what were you saying?

SETH. Something that will please you. The Major is to be the new cashier in the Farmers Bank. Your father and I are the biggest depositors, you know, and we arranged the matter without any trouble.

ALICE. You dear Seth! (*Runs to the MAJOR, and places her arms around his neck*) Major, I'm so glad to hear this. I will drive you to the village every morning and drive you home in the evening. (*Returns to SETH and takes his hand.*)

SETH. I wish I could do more for you, Alice. When I am far away from here, I shall think of the Major and you every day, and I know that you will both remember me just for old time's sake.

ALICE (*looking into his eyes*). Seth. You are not going to leave us?

SETH. Yes, Alice, I'm going out West. There is nothing here to keep me now. The railroad company bought nearly all my land, and paid me a fortune for it, and you see I must go somewhere, and out there I can work and— (*Turns away.*)

ALICE (*crosses to the MAJOR and lays her head on his shoulder in grief*). Major, Seth is going away!

SETH (*aside*). I must, it is better, far better that I should. (*Goes to D. L. where he lingers gazing at ALICE.*)

MAJOR (*embraces her tenderly. Aside*). He loves her, too, better than his life! (*The organ is heard playing again, off stage, as if in distance. To ALICE*) The organist is playing in the church. It is always the same hymn.

ALICE. He is playing "Lead, Kindly Light." Shall I recite it for you, Major? (*Sits on hassock at his feet.*)

MAJOR. Yes, do.

ALICE (*recites the Hymn*).

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom

Lead Thou me on;

The night is dark, and I am far from home,

Lead Thou me on.

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;

I loved to choose and see my path; but now

Lead Thou me on.

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will; remember not past years!

So long Thy power has blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on;
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

(NOTE.—*Instead of reciting the hymn, ALICE may pause until the organist commences to play for the second verse, and then sing the above softly to the organ's accompaniment.*)

ALICE (*speaks*). Oh! That dear old organist—his old age is so full of sorrow.

MAJOR. Why should he be sorrowful?

ALICE. Well, he is seventy-two years old, and alone in the world. Years ago, long before I was born, the old man lost his only son. The story is long since forgotten, Major, but the old man told it to me when I was a child, and it is fresh in my memory to-day. His boy ran away from home when he was eighteen and two years later he returned to his father, a fugitive from justice, but thoroughly repentant for his sins. For a few months everything went well, the boy led a good life, but one day an officer came to arrest him. He sprang on a horse and tried to escape, but he had not gone more than a hundred yards when the horse stumbled and fell. The boy was seriously injured, and died in his father's arms, while the officer was standing near.

MAJOR. For every sin there is a punishment, and that poor boy paid the debt in full.

ALICE (*rises and caresses him*). I should not have told you that story, forgive me. (*Pulling him gently*). Come, let us go to Seth.

(SETH *draws off L. unseen.*)

MAJOR (*places his arm around her and leads her L.*). Seth is the only brother I ever knew, and I love him dearly.
[EXIT both L.

ENTER BULLARD and COREY, C. E., and move down C.

COREY. Say, we're both liable to get pinched, prowling around a house like this.

BULLARD. Corey, I'm getting tired of you.

COREY. Well, when a man uses me right, I want to do the same by him.

BULLARD. Then get back to New York, and I'll work alone.

COREY. Not on your life, Bullard, if there's money in sight I want my share!

BULLARD. Then keep your mouth shut and follow my lead.

COREY. If I do I'll land in Sing Sing. You're too dirty for me, Bullard, and I'll work for a dollar a day before I'll stick to you much longer.

BULLARD. We used the Major all right, didn't we? I threw the sheriff off his track, and sent him back West.

COREY. And this fellow Seth paid us well to do it! My head may be thick, Bullard, but it's not always the head, it's the heart that tells a man whether he's doing right or not. (*Places his hand over his heart*) And there's something here that's making me hate you!

BULLARD (*cautiously*). You wouldn't squeal on me, Corey, would you?

COREY. Not if you deal square with me, but you are not on the level, Bullard. Why didn't you tell me that Galloway was here?

BULLARD. I didn't know.

COREY. You lie! I saw you with him yesterday, and I heard him tell you to your face that he could get along without the help of a traitor like you.

BULLARD. Galloway played a trick on us. Instead of going West, he got off the train a few miles from New York, and has been looking for his man ever since. When we get more money from Seth, you can tip the Major off, if you wish. That's fair, isn't it?

COREY. All right, that goes!

ENTER SETH L. *looking at them in surprise.*

SETH. What are you doing here? Did I not pay you both to keep away?

(*They move R. SETH moves to C.*)

BULLARD (*aside to COREY*). Follow my lead. (*To SETH*) Yes, you did, and as far as Galloway is concerned we've kept our word. But we were unfortunate with the money you gave to us, and if you'll give us one thousand more, (*The MAJOR appears in doorway L. and listens.*) Corey and I will go as far away as Seattle.

SETH. And if I refuse to pay you hush money a second time, what will you do?

BULLARD. Claim the reward offered for the Major's arrest; you love his wife, and to save her, you will save him. Major Remming, alias John Seabury, escaped convict, that's his pedigree!

SETH. I paid you one thousand on your promise to let the Major and his wife live in peace. How do I know that you will not break faith with me again?

BULLARD. We'll take the first train for Seattle, and send you a telegram the moment we arrive there, then you would be sure of us keeping faith with you.

SETH (*to COREY*). Can I trust you?

(BULLARD and COREY have by this time taken positions at the table.)

COREY (*bangs his fist on the table*). Count me out of this, Bullard. That fellow is too good a guy for me to rub it in!

BULLARD (*sneeringly*). You won't take the money, eh? Well, I will. (*To SETH*) Give us your check, and you'll never hear from us again. Make it payable to G. L. Bullard!

SETH (*makes out the check, and hands it to BULLARD*). The check is made payable to G. L. Bullard and Robert Corey, on demand.

BULLARD. That is made out wrong!

SETH. It is made out right. Stick to Bullard, Corey, until the check is cashed. I intend that you shall get your share.

BULLARD. Corey can trust me!

COREY. Just as long as I've got my eyes on you, that's all.

MAJOR (*crosses and points revolver at BULLARD'S head*). Return that check! (*BULLARD turns to him in fear*) or I will send a bullet crashing through your cowardly brain!

(*They eye each other keenly, and BULLARD slowly returns the check to SETH, as the MAJOR advances until his revolver is close to BULLARD'S head.*)

COREY (*in fear*). Don't kill him.

MAJOR. Now go, you cur. My finger is pressing gradually on the trigger. Forty seconds' delay will cost you your life. (*BULLARD back to C. D. with his hands raised as if to ward off the shot.*) I understand now why I have been left in peace for these three months. My protection has been paid for, by the best fellow on earth.

BULLARD (*in terror*). Don't shoot! [EXIT quickly D. C.]

MAJOR (*to COREY*). Corey, there is some good in you, but if you stick to Bullard, he will betray you as he has betrayed me. Now go!

COREY (*moves to D. C. with bowed head, and turns to look at the MAJOR.*) Major, get away as quick as you can. Galloway is here! [EXIT D. C.]

SETH (*meets the MAJOR C.*). Why didn't you let me pay those men. I was trying to protect you!

MAJOR. God bless you, Seth, for all you have done for me! When I am gone, make Alice your wife, for I will never return to make her unhappy again.

SETH. Can't I do something for you, Major?

MAJOR (*offering his hand*). Yes, just call me brother once again before I go!

SETH (*clasping his hand*). Brother!

MAJOR (*takes hat and long coat from clothes rack, and puts them on*). The old life has claimed me, Seth.

ENTER ALICE L.

MAJOR. But they will not get me without a struggle! It is the Major Remming of old they are dealing with now, and he will fight to the finish! (*Embraces ALICE, who advances to him.*)

ALICE (*in fear*). Major! What has happened?

MAJOR. Galloway is here. I must escape at once! (*Tenderly*) Good-bye, dear wife, try to think kindly of your worthless husband, and forgive him if you can. Only God knows what it will cost me to give up this, the only real happiness I ever knew!

(SETH moves to C. D. and looks off R.)

ALICE (*clings to the MAJOR, crying*). Your joys and sorrows are mine. I will go with you to the end of the world!

SETH. Major, the Sheriff is coming. My horse is in the stable already saddled. Once on his back, he would soon carry you miles away.

MAJOR. Quick, Seth! Change with me! (*They change hats and coats quickly*) Now sit at the table, and you, Alice, gain five minutes' time for me! (*Embracing her*) Good-bye, dear wife, good-bye, forever! [EXIT D. L.]

ALICE (*sobbing*). Oh, God! this is cruel, this is cruel!

SETH. Alice, we must help him to escape.

ALICE (*with energy*). Yes, yes, sit at the table, Seth, and I will make them believe that it is he!

(SETH becomes seated with his head on the table, and his arms concealing his face as much as possible, ALICE kneels, clinging to him in grief. SUE ENTERS D. L. and moves down L. with a startled expression on her face. GALLOWAY ENTERS D. C. followed by BULLARD and COREY.)

BULLARD (pointing at SETH). There is your man, Sheriff!

(GALLOWAY advances towards the table.)

ALICE (rising and raising her head). Stop, Sheriff! Before you take my husband back to prison, let me have a few minutes' conversation with him. I may never see him again.

GALLOWAY. I'm very sorry for you, lady, and you can talk just as long as you wish. It may be that your husband is innocent, but when he escaped from the penitentiary, he fastened the guilt upon himself. (Goes to BULLARD and COREY up stage.)

ALICE. Thank you, Sheriff. (Turns to SETH, and caresses him) Poor Major, what have you done in life that makes you an outcast, hunted by the law, with a price on your head. The woman you love, and who loves you in return, will never forget you, nor judge by any verdict of a cruel and unjust world. When you made me your wife, I believed in your goodness, and I believe in it now. If you are guilty as the law claims, then retribution must be your lot, but who should know your innermost secrets better than your own wife? To whom could you confide, if not in her? There is a code of honor among men that often causes the innocent to suffer? That code of honor has kept you silent, when a few words might have set you free. Not that your life has been blameless, but you are suffering now for another's crime, not your own, Major, not your own! (Caresses him.)

BULLARD (to GALLOWAY). This is getting tiresome. Why don't you get your man?

GALLOWAY. You keep quiet. That poor girl shall have her say.

BULLARD (moves down a little). Well, we don't want an oration, this isn't a funeral.

ALICE (to SETH). Where is the happiness of yesterday, our plans for the future—all ended now, Major, but if I could share your lot with you, I would gladly do so, even in a prison cell.

BULLARD (moves down c.). I'm getting even for the blow he struck me. Let the Sheriff take him.

ALICE (*rises and faces BULLARD*). Yes, you are getting even, Bullard, but you shall know what I think of you before you go. It is man's inhumanity to man that makes countless thousands mourn. It is reptiles like you who strike the hand that gives them bread, but you are the lowest of them all. When the Major picked you out of the gutter you were almost starving, and you followed him like a whining dog, glad of any kind of a master, who would guard and feed your worthless body. And this is how you repay him—betraying him to the police, because he tried to lead an honest life, because without his brain to lead you, you will drift back to the gutter, and starve in your evil career, as you did before you met him, you Judas! you Judas!

BULLARD (*raising his hand threateningly*). Oh! You!—

COREY (*moves down quickly and swings him aside*). Quit that, or I'll break every bone in your body. She's right, he did pick us out of the gutter.

(ALICE returns to SETH, and leans over him.)

BULLARD (*with a sneering laugh*). Well, he is sorry for it now! (*Goes to table, and after looking at SETH a few moments, discovers the deception. With a cry of anger pulls SETH back on the chair, and knocks his hat off.*)

ALICE. You are too late, Bullard!

BULLARD. That is not the man! He has escaped! (*They meet quickly c.*) [SETH EXIT with ALICE D. L.

GALLOWAY. He may be hiding in one of the rooms!

BULLARD. I'll soon find out!

(*Dashes quickly into room R. and reappears almost instantly struggling with OLIVER, who is in his night-shirt, which is half torn off, revealing him in a suit of loudly colored underwear. OLIVER rushes about in wild excitement. SHERIFF runs off quickly through D. C. followed by COREY.*)

ENTER SUE C.

OLIVER (*in great excitement*). What's the matter? What's the matter? (*Makes a rush at BULLARD, grabs him by the collar, and kicks him out through D. C. then comes down to SUE.*) What's the matter? What's the matter?

SUE (*covering her face with her hands*). Oliver, are you not ashamed of yourself? Dress yourself, the police are after the Major.

OLIVER. What for? What for?

SUE (*covering her face*). Put something on. Put something on.

(OLIVER *rushes into room R. and comes out again almost immediately, carrying his pants and a woman's hat and coat, still greatly excited.*)

SUE. Don't dress yourself here!

OLIVER. Have they got him?

(*Dresses hurriedly, and in great excitement, putting his pants on wrong, and wearing the woman's hat and coat, then rushes out through D. C.*)

SUE. They will arrest him too, in that condition.

[EXIT D. C.]

ENTER SETH and ALICE L. *as the sound of a horse galloping is heard without.*

ALICE. That is the Major. He may escape them yet. (*Goes to the door and looks out. The gallop stops suddenly.*) My God! The horse has fallen, and the Major is underneath. (*Approaches SETH in a fainting condition*) Oh, Seth, go to him, he is badly hurt. (*Sits down L. and covers her face with her hands.*) Oh, God! It is all so cruel.

SETH. Fate is indeed working against us. (*After a glance at ALICE*)

[EXIT quickly D. C.]

ENTER SUE and OLIVER D. C., and move down C.

OLIVER (*sadly*). I don't care what they accuse him of, he's a good man, and we know it.

[EXIT *into room R. Puts his clothes on as quickly as possible, then re-enters and takes position with SUE near table R.*]

SUE. Don't cry, Alice, everything will come out all right.

ENTER SETH *supporting the MAJOR, who is badly hurt, showing his injuries by a mark across the forehead, and his shirt, torn and dirty.* ALICE rises and helps SETH to place him in the chair. ENTER GALLOWAY, BULLARD and COREY D. C. and stand near the door with heads uncovered. ALICE caresses the MAJOR tenderly. SETH looks on in pity.

MAJOR (*speaking with an effort*). It is all over now, dear, the life has been crushed out of me. Seth will make you happy, far happier than I could ever hope to do.

ALICE (*sobbing*). My poor Major.

MAJOR (*gives his hand feebly to SETH*). Brother, guard her with tenderness and care, for I am going to take a long journey this time!

(*SETH draws away a little as COREY draws near with a loud sob, and falls on his knees at the side of the MAJOR.*)

COREY. Forgive me, Major, forgive me!

MAJOR. It's all right now, Corey. It's all right, boy.

(*COREY draws back, with his hand to his eyes. The organ is heard again, and continues to play until the curtain descends.*)

MAJOR. The organist is playing his favorite hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light." Perhaps I shall meet his wayward boy where I am going! (*Half rises with a gasp, and sinks back*) Seth, Alice. Wife. (*Dies.*)

COREY (*with a sob*). Dead.

(*ALICE sinks on her knees with a cry of despair. SETH reverently raises his hand.*)

SETH. It is God's way, Alice. His will be done!

COREY (*turns upon BULLARD with a cry of hate, and points his finger at him*). Sheriff, I know of a crime that man committed. Turn him over to the police, and I'll testify against him!

(*As the curtain descends the SHERIFF is seen placing the hand-cuffs on BULLARD. COREY and he lead him out of the room through D. C. with their hands on his shoulder. OLIVER stands R. with his arm around SUE, whose head is resting on his breast. SETH, ALICE and the MAJOR hold their positions.*)

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